Indo-Turkish Co-operation

4918. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Turkey have decided to root out dual menace and build a closer relationship with cooperation in every sphere with regard to culture, education, economic and technology;

(b) whether it is a fact that Turkish Prime Minister during his visit to India have urged closer cooperation between India and his country to flight fundamentalism and growing menace of terrorism across international borders; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to attain these objectives and by when these would show results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. During the visit of Turkish Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Bulent Ecevit from 30th March to 2nd April, 2000, both sides reaffirmed their desire for forging closer relations and understanding, commensurate with the historical and cultural bonds that exist between the two countries, agreements signed included; (1) MoU on establishment of mechanism for political consultation between the foreign ministries; (2) MoU on cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors; and (3) Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2000—2002.

It was felt that apart from intensifying trade, opportunities also existed for cooperation in development projects in India and Turkey and in third countries. Infrastructure, including railways; agriculture; and computer software were among areas identified for such cooperation.

(b) and (c) The Two sides condemed the increasing incidents of international terrorism and pledged to continue to support international efforts and to work together to combat the problem within the framework of international agreements and conventions.